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Ambassador Bruce should by now have received copies of working level papers re Soviet note on Berlin which left Washington December 5 and were scheduled arrive Bonn afternoon December 7. We hope these will be useful as representing preliminary views of Department during quadripartite discussions in Bonn this week.

While drafts of possible replies to Soviet note being prepared in Department we do not anticipate that there would be consideration of actual text by quadripartite group Bonn prior to Paris meetings. We assume that during current discussions three Embassies and Fedrep Foreign Office would exchange views re significance of Soviet action and possible forms which Western response might take. Out of these discussions we would expect to emerge certain measures of agreement on working assumptions to guide preparation of reply together with clear understanding of any differences of approach which might

develop

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develop among Four Powers. We would hope that Bonn Group could have ready for consideration at Paris official level meetings December 13 and December 14 preliminary quadripartite report summarizing points of agreement and disagreement in analysis and in recommendations for action.

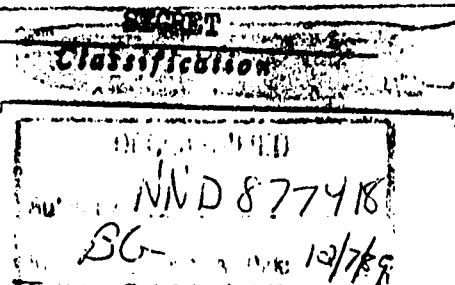
Depending on whether complete Washington clearance can be obtained may also be possible this week for US Embassy to begin with British and French process of re-writing current contingency plans. Assume, however, at least initially, this would have to be without Fedrep participation, although German views likely to be important factor if British and perhaps French to be persuaded change required.

So far as can be anticipated at this juncture, quadripartite meeting of Foreign Ministers in Paris will not attempt to approve specific draft reply to Soviet note, although possible texts may be submitted for purposes of discussion. Apart from usual communique which may emerge from Four Power Meetings, NATO Ministerial Council will, of course, expect to receive report from Four Foreign Ministers re their deliberations, and such report will presumably have important effect on attitude of other NATO countries. Many Foreign Ministers may be expected to air their views on Berlin crisis under Agenda Item 2 (Review of International Situation), and Secretary presumably will devote significant portion of his remarks during discussion under Item 2 to Berlin.

So far as practicable, we would hope that discussions in Bonn this week could contribute to making fruitful subsequent Paris meetings described above. NATO sessions admittedly coming a little too early in terms of preparations of Four Powers

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principally concerned with Berlin, but this will not absolve from necessity meeting expectation throughout Western world that NATO will react resolutely and purposefully to latest Soviet threat.

In meantime, we propose instruct (in separate cable) US representative at December 10 Council Meeting to state views along lines cover sheet to working papers mentioned paragraph one above, to mention that Four Powers are consulting in Bonn with view to preparing for Paris meetings, and to make point that resolute and considered reply is preferable to precipitate response to Soviet note.

Hester

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